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longer one the centre-pin *G*, on which the bit works. The arm *B* has a perforation *H* to admit the screw *I*.

In order to regulate the exact size of the hole to be cut by the bit, the user applies his rule between the centre-pin and the lip of the cutter *EF*, so as to get the radius of the required circle, at the same time loosening the screw *I*, which is fastened into the longer arm, and works in a chase in the shorter or cutting arm, the head of the screw keeping the two arms tightly together when set for an operation.

Three of these bits constitute a set. The first, or smallest one, being calculated for holes of from $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch to $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch, the second from $\frac{1}{2}$ of an inch to 1 inch, and the third from 1 inch to 2 inches.

The ordinary bits to answer the above end, would cost the user from 11s. to 12s, whereas this complete set is furnished at 4s., thereby effecting a saving of upwards of 60 per cent.

No. XII.

KEY INSTRUMENT FOR DENTISTS.

*The Thanks of the Society were presented to J. S. PRI-
DEAUX, Esq. of Southampton, for an Improvement in
the Key-Instrument for Dentists.*

ALTHOUGH the extraction of a tooth may appear an affair of minor importance in comparison with some of the principal operations of surgery, yet a consideration of the extreme frequency of its performance, compared with that of these latter, will, perhaps, lead to the conclusion that the amount of pain arising from it, considered as a whole, exceeds the sum-total of that arising from all other surgical operations put together.

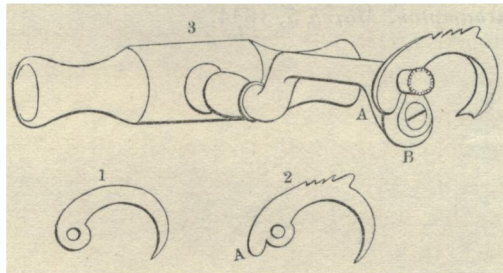
The removal of a stump, by means of the punch or elevator, is also in itself, in many cases, a very prolonged, painful, and severe operation, and one very generally contemplated with alarm by the patient; so much so that it frequently happens that timid females submit to the most excruciating neuralgia for many weeks, or even months, without being able to summon courage to have the cause of their sufferings extracted with these instruments. These considerations are quite sufficient to shew the value and importance to the public of every discovery tending to diminish the difficulties attendant on the removal of both teeth and stumps, and to abridge the suspense and the sufferings of the patient, and I confidently rely upon that, as an ample justification of myself, in calling the attention of the Society to the improvement which it is the object of this paper to explain.

Although the key does not occupy the rank which it once held as an extracting instrument, in the eyes of the dental profession, being at the present day but occasionally, instead of almost exclusively, employed by the most skilful operators, yet as it is the instrument nearly universally used by the general practitioner, and that with which the teeth of the great mass of the community still are—and for many years appear likely to be—extracted, any improvement in its construction must for this reason alone be regarded as worthy of attention. As a substitute for the punch, or elevator, in those cases where a fang is so much more deeply decayed on one side than the other, as to render it impossible to grasp it firmly with the forceps, this improvement is particularly worthy of attention.

In the ordinary key-instruments, in order to adjust and press down the point of the claw on the neck of the

tooth or stump to be extracted, the finger of the operator is required to be inserted in the mouth of the patient,—a proceeding which, when the tooth to be removed is situated at the back part of the mouth, frequently obstructs the sight of the operator, and gives rise to a greater or less degree of difficulty, inconvenience, and loss of time in fixing the instrument. That this defect has long been felt and acknowledged, is evident from the various contrivances to obviate it which have at different periods been proposed, some by men eminent in the profession; all of which, however, have hitherto proved either too complicated in structure, or awkward in application, ever to come into general use.

Fig. 1 represents the old claw, fig. 2 the improved



claw, and fig. 3 is the usual key, with the improved claw added.

The improvement consists in the addition of a small bit of steel, or tail *A*, to the back of the claw *B*, of such a size and shape as to arrest the motion of the claw upwards, when about parallel with the centre of the bolster.

The instrument being inserted in the mouth with the claw, over the tooth to be removed, it is evident that, by turning the wrist in the reverse way to that required for extracting the tooth, the claw may be forced down on its neck as low as desired. This effected, the forefinger,

when necessary, should be placed on the claw to retain it in its position, the fulcrum adjusted, and the operation completed in the usual manner.

To obtain the full benefit which this contrivance is capable of conferring, the claws, instead of terminating in three or four roughly finished points, arranged in a right line, should be slightly hollowed on the inside, and possess a fine-cutting edge. Thus constructed, when once placed on the edge of the stump to be extracted, they may be pressed down closely in contact with it, far below the surface of the gum, with the greatest facility, the operator having, at the same time, a full view of the progress of the instrument.

J. S. PRIDEAUX.

Southampton, March 5, 1844.